

Remarks/Arguments:

Preliminary Matters

Claims 13 - 25 are pending. Applicants note with appreciation the indication that claims 14 - 25 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form. Claim 14 has been rewritten accordingly, and is currently in condition for allowance. Applicants respectfully submit that because claims 15 - 25 are dependent upon allowable claim 14 (as amended), claims 15 - 25 should also be allowed at least as dependent upon an allowable base claim.

New claims 26 - 36 have been added based upon originally-filed claims 14 and 16 - 25. No new matter has been added.

35 U.S.C. § 112

The claims stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as indefinite. Claims 14, 18, 19, and 23 have been amended to clarify the claim language, and it is respectfully submitted that these claims are currently in condition for allowance. Applicants respectfully submit that because claims 15 - 17, 20 - 22, 24, and 25 are ultimately dependent upon allowable claim 14 (as amended), claims 15 - 17, 20 - 22, 24, and 25 should also be allowed at least as dependent upon an allowable base claim. Reconsideration of these claims is respectfully requested.

35 U.S.C. § 102

Claim 13 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as anticipated by German Patent No. DE 195 37 660 to Günther, U.S. Patent No. 5,090,294 to Endou, or U.S. Patent No. 3,897,716 to Ramage et al. Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection of this claim and respectfully submit that this claim is patentable over Günther, Endou, or Ramage for at least the reasons set forth below.

Independent claim 13, as amended, recites features that are neither disclosed nor suggested by Günther, Endou, or Ramage, namely:

Vacuum brake booster for motor vehicles, including a booster housing whose interior is subdivided by a movable wall into a vacuum chamber and a working chamber, a control valve that controls the pressure difference acting on the movable wall and is arranged in a control housing that carries the movable wall,...wherein the control housing includes an adapter that carries at least one filter, wherein *the adapter includes a collar for attaching a pleated bellows or a cap.*

By way of example, as illustrated in Fig. 1, an adapter 11 includes a cylindrical wall 18 and utilizes a collar 14 for abutment of the adapter 11 on an end face 17 of control housing 5, on the one hand, and for attachment of a pleated bellows 15, on the other hand. Page 5, lines 10 - 14. Similarly with reference to Fig. 2, an adapter 11 comprises a collar 41 that is used to receive a pleated bellows 42. Page 5, lines 25 - 27. Fig. 3 illustrates an adapter 11 having a collar 25 used to attach a cap 16. Page 6, lines 5 - 6.

In contrast, Günther neither discloses nor suggests *an adapter that includes a collar for attaching a pleated bellows or a cap*. As illustrated in Figs. 1 - 4 of Günther, the end of the bellows disclosed by Günther is attached to a control housing. Thus, Günther neither discloses nor suggests *an adapter that includes a collar for attaching a pleated bellows or a cap*, and therefore fails to disclose or suggest each and every element of Applicants' claimed invention.

In further contrast, Endou neither discloses nor suggests *an adapter that includes a collar for attaching a pleated bellows or a cap*. Endou discloses a dust cover 44 having a flat portion 44a covering the rear end opening of a valve body 5. Column 6, lines 49 - 51. A central bore 44b is formed through the flat portion 44a for receiving the input rod 15. Column 6, lines 51 - 53. Thus, Endou neither discloses nor suggests *an adapter that includes a collar for attaching a pleated bellows or a cap*, and therefore fails to disclose or suggest each and every element of Applicants' claimed invention.

Similarly, Ramage neither discloses nor suggests *an adapter that includes a collar for attaching a pleated bellows or a cap*. Ramage discloses a cap 74 located between the connecting junction of a cylindrical spacer 76 and a bore 50. Column 3, lines 26 - 28. A second filter 108 abuts the cap 74 to precondition the air from the environment as it passes through holes 110 in dust boot 112. Column 3, lines 33 - 36. Thus, Ramage neither discloses nor suggests *an adapter that includes a collar for attaching a pleated bellows or a cap*, and therefore fails to disclose or suggest each and every element of Applicants' claimed invention.

Accordingly, for the foregoing reasons, Applicants respectfully submit that independent claim 13 (as amended) is patentable over Günther, Endou, and Ramage, and should be allowed. Reconsideration of this claim is respectfully requested. Applicants respectfully submit that because new claims 26 - 36 are ultimately dependent upon allowable claim 13 (as amended), claims 26 - 36 should also be allowed at least as dependent upon an allowable base claim.

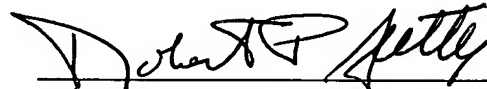
Allowable Subject Matter

As explained above, claims 14 - 25 are clearly allowable.

Conclusion

In view of the amendments and points of distinction set forth above, Applicants contend that the above-identified application is in condition for allowance, which action is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,



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